

Appln. No. 09/955,857
Amendment dated March 1, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 1, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The December 1, 2003 Office Action and the Examiner's comments have been carefully considered. In response, claims are cancelled and amended, and remarks are set forth below in a sincere effort to place the present application in form for allowance. The amendments are supported by the application as originally filed. Therefore, no new matter is added.

Inasmuch as the present Amendment raises no new issues for consideration, and, in any event, places the present application in condition for allowance or in better condition for consideration on appeal, its entry under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.116 are respectfully requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 112

In the Office Action claims 15-17 are rejected under 35 USC 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. In response, claims 15-17 are cancelled, thereby rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

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ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner's indication that claim 13 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims is acknowledged and appreciated.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 103

In the Office Action claims 1, 3 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over USP 4,770,520 (Hoogesteger) in view of USP 4,143,938 (Feinkbloom). In response, claims 1, 3 and 15-17 are cancelled.

Claims 10, 12 and 14 are rejected under USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoogesteger in view of Feinkbloom, and further in view of USP 4,567,476 (Schwab). In response, claim 10 is amended to include limitations from claim 13 which was indicated as being allowable over the prior art of record. Therefore, claim 10 is in form for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited. Claims 12 and 14 which are dependent on claim 10 are patentable over the prior art in view of their dependence on claim 10. In view of the foregoing, claims 10, 12 and 14 are in form for immediate allowance.

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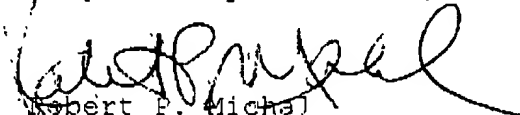
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Entry of this Amendment under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.116, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to point out where there is support for a contrary view.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,


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